Plan Training

Battle focus is a concept used to derive peacetime training requirements from wartime missions. It guides the planning, execution, and assessment of each organization's training program to ensure that its members train as they are going to fight. The training management approach is used to implement the battle focus. In this Appendix, we will discuss the four steps of the training management cycle: developing the Mission Essential Task List (METL), planning training, executing training, and assessing training.

MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK LIST (METL) DEVELOPMENT

D-1. Peacetime training is based on wartime requirements that are derived from the band's next higher headquarters' battle tasks. Band commanders must selectively identify the tasks that are essential to accomplishing the band's wartime mission. Commanders use the four step METL development process to identify and select these mission essential tasks.

WAR PLANS

D-2. War plans consist of the units' anticipated wartime missions, operations plans, and contingency plans. The missions and related information provided in these plans are key in determining essential training tasks.

EXTERNAL DIRECTIVES

D-3. External directives are additional sources of training tasks that relate to an organization's wartime mission. Some examples are mission training plans, mobilization plans, force integration plans, and installation wartime transition and deployment plans. In some instances, these directives identify component tasks that make up the wartime mission (MTP's). In others, they specify additional tasks that relate to the wartime mission.

COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS

D-4. Commanders select for training only those tasks essential to accomplish their organization's wartime mission by analyzing the applicable tasks contained in their external directives. This process reduces the number of tasks to be trained and concentrates on the most important collective training tasks required to accomplish the wartime mission. The compilation of tasks critical for wartime mission accomplishments is the organization's METL.

METL

D-5. Mission essential tasks must apply to the entire organization and must support and compliment higher headquarters' METL. The availability of resources does not affect METL development. Organizations that conduct daily support functions, such as bands, must address differences between peacetime and wartime operating conditions. (See Table D-1 for an example of an Army band's METL).

PLAN TRAINING

D-6. Planning links the unit METL and the execution of battle focused training. It is a centralized process that aligns training priorities with wartime requirements at all levels within the unit. Battle focus allows the commander to narrow his scope of planning to both wartime and musical mission essential tasks.

COMMANDER'S INPUT

D-7. The commander provides two principal inputs at the start of the planning process: the METL (discussed above) and the training assessment. The training assessment compares the organization's current level of training proficiency with the desired level of war fighting and musical proficiency.

PROFICIENCY DETERMINATION

D-8. Commanders determine the current levels of training proficiency by analyzing training evaluations. Commanders will use these evaluations to develop an assessment of the organization's overall capability to accomplish each mission essential task.

QUARTERLY TRAINING BRIEF (QTB)

D-9. A tool that is used to discuss past, present, and future training expectations is the Quarterly Training Briefing (QTB). Band commanders brief the QTB two command levels above the unit, usually to their battalion or brigade commander. The QTB is conducted prior to the lock-in window after drafting the Quarterly Training Guidance (QTG) and Quarterly Training Calendar (QTC). Some topics that should be briefed include the unit's METL assessment, next quarter's training, assessment of soldier and leader training, and long-range training update. The band SGM or 1SG normally briefs after the band commander. They provide an analysis of the unit's soldier training proficiency and discuss the unit's proposed soldier training and education plans. Overall, the QTB allows the commander and their SGM or First Sergeant to highlight their unit's strengths, weaknesses, initiatives, and priorities.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

D-10. The training planning process begins with the assessment of training. Commanders use their subordinates to assess the training level on mission essential tasks. They rely on subordinate leaders' feedback to determine their unit's or soldiers' proficiency level. Commanders then analyze all evaluations and use them to identify the sub-tasks for each mission essential task that may require further training. In-depth assessment determines a strategy to improve training proficiency on weaknesses and plan sustainment training on strengths. Assessment links the evaluation of training executed to the planning of upcoming training.

Long-Range Planning

D-11. Long-range planning is the first step in converting command goals into individual and unit performance. It is the mix of individual, leader, and collective training that best improves and maintains a unit while making the best use of resources. In developing a training strategy, the commander selects the training events and activities that focus on specific unit training needs. Long-range training plans extend out at least one year and are based on the Command Training Guidance (CTG) from the band's higher headquarters (battalion, brigade, or division). The long-range planning calendar is published concurrently with the CTG and graphically depicts the schedule of events in the CTG. In addition to the one-year projection, any known major training events scheduled beyond the normal planning window should appear on the long-range planning calendar. Upon approval and publication by the band's higher headquarters, the long-range calendar is "locked in" to provide planning stability to subordinate organizations. The band commander then coordinates with these subordinate units, as well as support units, and any other organizations that might generate training detractors if not fully integrated into the band's long-range plan. Some examples of the types of training events that might appear on a band's long-range calendar might include: ARTEPs, Technical Inspections, Weapons Qualifications, and/or Field Training Exercises (FTX).

Short-Range Planning

D-12. Short-range training plans define in greater detail the broad guidance on training events and other activities contained in the long-range calendar. They refine the allocation of resources to supporting agencies and provide a common basis for preparing near-term training plans. After receiving guidance from higher headquarters, band commanders publish their QTG. The QTG is usually published about 6 weeks prior to the start of the quarter, which allows sufficient time for near-term planning before the start of the quarter. The commander's guidance provides the detail from which training schedules can be developed. It also lays out the sequence of training to be accomplished and includes the who, what, when, and where to train. Senior NCO's play an important role in the QTG development process. They provide planning recommendations on the unit's individual training program. They identify individual tasks that must be integrated into collective mission essential tasks during the short-range period. Short-range planning calendars are published along with the QTG and graphically depict the schedule of events. These calendars should be posted where soldiers can see them. Some examples of what might be seen on a band short-range planning calendar include diagnostic and record APFTs, Battalion QTBs, and upcoming band concerts.

Near-Term Planning

D-13. Near-term planning defines specific actions required to execute the short-range training plan. It is the final phase of planning prior to the execution of training. Near-term planning covers a six to eight week period prior to the conduct of training for bands. Formal near-term planning culminates when the band publishes its training schedule. Events that are depicted on the training schedule are organized through the use of training meetings. At the small unit level, such as in bands, training meetings focus on the specifics of the training to be conducted. Information that is passed out at band training meetings must reach every soldier through the platoon chain of command. The training schedule provides this detailed information. Participants for training meetings include the band commander, first sergeant, platoon sergeants, squad leaders, section supervisors (training NCOIC, operations NCOIC, etc.), and any other key personnel specified by the commander. Near-term planning conducted at the training meeting results in detailed training schedules. The training schedule is the band's primary management tool to ensure training is conducted on time and by qualified trainers with the necessary resources. Once the training schedule is approved and signed by the band commander, it constitutes an official order. It can only be changed by the approving authority. Leaders must ensure that daily training is conducted to standard and adheres to the training schedule. Training schedules should specify the date and time training starts and ends, personnel to be trained, subject to be trained, location of training, names of the trainers, training references, uniform and equipment required, and any comments or remarks concerning these specifics. Informal planning and detailed coordination (pre-execution checks) continue until the training is performed. To conduct effective, meaningful training for soldiers, preparation is essential. Proper preparation gives leaders confidence in their abilities to train. To prepare trainers to conduct performance-oriented training, commanders and leaders must: provide training guidance, resources, and references; provide preparation time; schedule rehearsals for the trainer; conduct rehearsals; and prepare training and evaluation outlines.

EXECUTE TRAINING

PREPARATION

D-14. In order to conduct effective training, the trainer must be thoroughly prepared. In order to be thoroughly prepared, the trainer must know how to perform the task being trained, know how to train others to perform the task, and also know how to conduct an After Action Review (AAR). The trainer must demonstrate that he has mastered the task that he is training. This requires the study of appropriate publications as well as hands-on practice. Preparation of a training outline and rehearsal will enable the trainer to become more familiar and confident with the material to be presented. The trainer must be able to train others to perform the task. The best way to train others in performance oriented training is through hands-on training. This type of training reinforces the proper method of task execution in soldiers' minds. The trainer must also conduct himself in a confident manner in front of soldiers. Confidence is gained through study and rehearsal. A confident trainer will inspire soldiers and assist them in assimilating the training experience. Self-confidence is demonstrated when a trainer can easily and accurately answer questions. Any questions that are not answered are researched and answered at another time. The last step in preparation is the ability to conduct an AAR. This subject will be covered in the last part of this Appendix.

PRESENTATION

D-15. Presentation of training provides soldiers with specific training objectives (tasks, conditions, and standards) to be trained and evaluation methods to be used. The three methods for presenting training are lectures, demonstrations, and conferences.

Lectures

D-16. Lectures present information with little discussion. They are the least preferred method of instruction and are used only when there is a large group and no performance activities are required, training time is limited, soldiers know very little about the subject, or trainers want to emphasize material with one preferred method

Conferences

D-17. In conferences, soldiers are able to discuss the information that is presented. Conferences work best when there is more than one correct procedure, when soldiers have some knowledge of the task, or when time is not critical. Conferences do not require hands-on performance. They encourage a free exchange of information. Trainers must know the subject well and must have the ability to control a discussion.

Demonstrations

D-18. Demonstrations are the preferred method of presentation used at the company level and below. The visual impact of a brief demonstration on the proper method of performing the task greatly assists the learning process. Seeing a task performed correctly provides greater understanding than any amount of explanation. Overall, demonstrations save time by showing the soldiers the correct way to perform a task, use the leader as the primary trainer whenever possible, present information that properly motivates, and conclude when the soldiers understand the task well enough to perform it.

PERFORMANCE

D-19. For training to be effective, it must be practiced once it has been presented. This technique is known as performance-oriented training. Early and repetitive performance of training tasks effectively reinforces newly acquired skills. The key to conducting performance-oriented training is by making it "hands-on". "Hands-on" means that the soldier actually practices what they have been taught. Physical contact is the key to learning the task. The soldier must participate to receive the full benefit. Leaders must emphasize accomplishing training to standard by identifying the Army standard and demanding that it be achieved. If soldiers cannot meet the Army standard, additional time must be allotted to retrain the task until it can be performed correctly. There are three stages of training: initial, refresher, and sustainment. Each stage occurs separately or in combination. The best training adheres to the seven keys to successful training.

- Focus on fundamentals.
- Incorporate live fire exercises.
- Conduct night and adverse weather training to increase realism.
- Use battle and crew drills.
- Incorporate lane training.
- Use competition to stimulate interest and morale.
- Always conduct Post Operations checks at the conclusion of training.

Initial Training

> D-20. Initial training is conducted when soldiers have little or no familiarity with the task. During initial training, soldiers practice each task step, then practice all steps in sequence, and practice the complete task until it's done correctly.

Refresher Training

> D-21. Refresher training is conducted when soldiers require training on certain subtasks. During refresher training, soldiers practice training to the Army standard. Conditions are modified to enhance training. Leaders and trainers modify conditions by increasing complexity and using more realism. Regardless of how demanding the conditions are, the standard remains constant.

Sustainment Training

> D-22. Sustainment training is conducted when soldiers or units meet the Army standard but lose proficiency without practice. This type of training is conducted with increased realism and added complexity. During the sustainment phase of training, soldiers practice tasks collectively to maintain proficiency.

ASSESS TRAINING

> D-23. Training assessment is an integral part of the training management cycle. Information obtained as a result of a thoroughly planned evaluation provides the basis for the commander's and leader's assessment of his unit and training program. Throughout, leaders benefit through the leadership assessment and development program that occurs concurrently with the training and evaluation process. Ultimately, adjustments are made in resources, personnel, training methods, and other areas to refine the training program focus.

EVALUATIONS

> D-24. Training evaluations measure the ability of soldiers, leaders, and units to perform a task against Army standards. An evaluation is a snapshot, at any given time, of whether or not the task was conducted to standard under the prescribed conditions. There are four types of evaluations: informal/internal, informal/external, formal/internal, and formal/external. The four types of evaluations can be combined to meet the particular needs of the units or soldiers being evaluated. Regardless of the type of evaluation, leaders must be present at all training to personally supervise and evaluate.

Formal Evaluations

> D-25. Formal evaluations are resource intensive and are usually scheduled on the long-range and short-range calendars. Formal evaluations require an observer controller (OC) and are used for unannounced training events (Army Band Technical Inspection).

Informal Evaluations

> D-26. Informal evaluations are continuous evaluations conducted by all leaders in the chain of command and provide immediate feedback on training proficiency (section leader checking for instrument maintenance).

Internal Evaluations

D-27. Internal evaluations are planned, resourced, and conducted by the unit undergoing the evaluation. These evaluations are a function of unit leadership whenever training is conducted. This type of evaluation is best suited for squad-sized elements to document results of training (section leaders evaluate their section's collective tasks IAW MTP T&EO's).

External Evaluations

D-28. External evaluations are planned but are normally conducted by the headquarters unit two levels up from the unit being evaluated (Command Inspection i.e., the brigade inspects the band).

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR)

D-29. The AAR is a tool used to review soldier, leader, and unit performance on specific tasks and missions. The purpose of the AAR is to actively involve soldiers and leaders in a discussion process to discover three aspects of training: what happened, why something happened, and how to improve on weaknesses and sustain strengths in the future. AARs also provide commanders with information and insight necessary to develop a unit training assessment. AARs encourage multiple views from soldiers and leaders that may have an observation, insight, or idea that will improve future task performance. AARs are conducted during or immediately after the training event, focus on training objectives, focus on performances, involve all participants, use open-ended questions, judge neither success or failure, determine strengths and weaknesses, and link performance to subsequent training. The real benefit of an AAR is taking the AAR results and applying them to training. If the results of the training are positive, the information from the AAR is used to plan future events. If the training did not achieve the Army standard, the unit must immediately retrain. If retraining is delayed, soldiers must understand that the training did not meet the Army standard and they will be retrained later. There are two types of AARs: formal and informal.

Informal AAR

D-30. Informal AARs are used at the platoon level and below. These AARs may be scheduled or may be done on the spot during training as required. The main benefit of an informal AAR is that it provides immediate feedback while the training is still fresh in the soldiers' minds.

Formal AAR

D-31. Formal AARs are held at the company level and above. Formal AARs are completed during finalization of the near-term training plan.

AAR Sequence

D-32. The AAR sequence is broken down into four steps: planning, preparation, execution, and the use of AAR results.

D-33. **Planning**. The AAR plan is part of the overall evaluation plan. Leaders conducting an AAR must ensure that it accomplishes its objective to promote learning. At a minimum, AAR plans should include:

- AAR Objectives
- Designated qualified observer controllers
- Review the training and evaluation plan
- Identify the participants
- Identify AAR site
- Select training aids
- Review the unit's training objectives and plans

D-34. **Preparation**. Thorough planning reduces preparation time. AAR preparation includes pre-positioning of training aids, building of sand tables, and deciding on general layout. The AAR discussion must be fully developed and organized. The leader takes notes from the training event and puts them in chronological sequence, then selects the more critical events for discussion.

D-35. **Execution**. The actual AAR begins with an introduction and discussion of the ground rules. The sequence of events may include the following actions:

- Review training objectives
- State commander's mission/intent
- State OPFOR's mission/intent
- Discuss key issues
- Discuss safety issues
- Summary

Provide Ceremonial Support	- Conduct Drill Band - Integrate official, ceremonial, and martial music into rehearsals at all levels
Troop Support Functions	- Organizational Days - Troop departures and arrivals - Dining In/Dining Out - Installation/Division Run
Concerts	- Conduct individual and collective training frequently and regularly - Conduct Christmas/Holiday Concert - Perform 4th of July Salute to the Union - Prepare Show Band for 2 month recruiting tour - Brass Quintet performance at Easter sunrise service
Protocol Functions	- Commanding General's Lawn Party - Battalion/Brigade Dining In/Dining Out - Army Birthday Ball - Adjutant General's Corps Ball
Religious Functions	- Post-wide prayer breakfast - Funeral support (duty bugler) - Full band military funeral - Special worship service support
Command Post Security Operations	- Conduct weapons training & qualification - Conduct CTT training - Conduct NBC battle drills - Conduct quarterly STC
Enemy Prisoner of War/Civilian Internee Operations	- Conduct weapons training & qualification - Conduct CTT training - Conduct NBC battle drills - Conduct quarterly STX
Support Installation Contingency Plans	- Conduct weapons training & qualification - Conduct CTT training
Train Reserve Component Bands	- Conduct individual tasks - Conduct collective tasks - Evaluate performance

Table D-1. Example of an Army Band METL